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Message from the President

Georgia Southern University

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[GSNEWS] Monthly Message from the President

1 message

GS President <president@georgiasouthern.edu>
To: GS-FacStaff <gs-facstaff@georgiasouthern.edu>

Thu, Jun 13, 2019 at 8:56 AM

Dear Colleagues,

Good morning. I hope the summer is going well for each of you.

As I round out my first 90 days learning more about this great university, I continue to be amazed at the breadth of what Georgia Southern has to offer and the potential I see ahead. From my family and I visiting the Wildlife Center, to campus receptions, Faculty Senate, Staff Advisory Council, Alumni, Athletic, and Foundation Board meetings, initial interviews and meetings with my “Learning Network” colleagues, car karaoke, baseball games, Spring Commencement, Student Leadership, SOAR Leaders, and Student Government Association awards and installation of new Senators, meetings with Chambers, Development Authorities, community leaders, community receptions, Rotary presentations...to finalizing the merger between the Georgia Southern and Armstrong foundations, and the Army Communities of Gold Excellence Award Ceremony for Fort Stewart – it has been a whirlwind of activity and relationship building (not to mention about 5,000 miles on my car)!

We have also made progress on some significant projects underway around the university, and I wanted to provide you with an update.

First, I hope you saw the email that went out last week about the Comprehensive Administrative Review (CAR) recommendations that we are now starting to implement across the university. I want to stress that the purpose of CAR is to search for ways to operate more efficiently and effectively as a university, while focusing on student success and our core academic mission and ensuring all organizational changes and efficiencies have an assessment process to measure effectiveness. I sincerely appreciate the care with which all involved approached the process and the improvements we are now implementing.

Another major project nearing completion is the faculty and staff salary studies. In total, we are directing approximately \$6.5 million in salary equity to faculty and staff (plus \$500,000 in faculty promotion and tenure salary increases, and another \$4 million -- which includes \$3 million from state funding -- in salary merit increases to faculty and staff.). If you are doing the math, that is \$11M in recurring salary increases for FY20 – investing in you, our faculty and staff!

For staff, this allows us to ensure all salaries are at least at the entry point minimum of their pay band, with additional targeted market adjustments planned for certain critical areas. We are very pleased that this market equity process will impact approximately 975 staff positions. Letters for staff went out this week notifying staff members about their salary for the new fiscal year, which starts July 1.

Faculty notifications about their FY ‘20 salaries will be coming within the next few weeks. There will be two letters for faculty -- first outlining merit increases, then a second detailing market equity increases. We need additional time to ensure we are thorough as we apply market equity increases and merit increases to faculty contracts for the first time. With our equity adjustments, we will be able to ensure compensation for the faculty, as a whole, will be at approximately 90% of peer median. We are very pleased that this process will impact approximately 325 faculty positions.

In all cases, merit and market equity increases are being applied to employees’ base FY ‘19 salary.

These investments are intentional in putting into practice our belief that at Georgia Southern University, we are investing in you...our **People**...with a **Purpose** to transform lives...and **Actions** outlined in our new strategic plan – all aligned to empower us to grow ourselves so we can grow others.

This commitment will be outlined in our new strategic plan, which will be finalized before the new academic year begins. This concept of People...Purpose...Action! Growing ourselves to grow others - captures the life-long pursuit of learning as faculty, staff, and students to continuously learn, improve, and develop our knowledge, perspectives, and capabilities, as individuals to impact our university, our students, and the communities we serve. To grow is a state of constant improvement and development — not for our own sake but for the impact we will have on others. Georgia Southern aspires to grow in excellence, in quality, in reputation and ultimately in impact.

Also before we get to the new academic year, we should be announcing our plans for the fall commencement format. We are working now to finish gathering feedback from our May commencement ceremonies, so we can make an informed decision going forward. As you may have heard, we gathered approximately 1,800 responses through our online survey. Clearly, this is an experience people feel passionately about, and they should. We also have solicited feedback from focus groups and committees that include students, organizers, faculty, volunteers and alumni. All involved want commencement to be a memorable experience that instills pride in all who attend.

Thank you for all you do at Georgia Southern and for your belief in the transformational power of education.

Sincerely,
Kyle

Go Eagles!